

FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

16 18

MARION

N

MRN.303

Town/City: Marion

Place: (neighborhood or village): Wharf Village

Photograph



Address: 99 Water Street

Historic Name: Sherman's Inn/ Luce-Sherman-Harwood House and Shipyard

Uses: Present: yacht club

Original: single-family residential

Date of Construction: prior to 1784

Source: deeds

Style/Form: Georgian/ gambrel block

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation:

Wall/Trim: wood shingle/ wood

Roof: wood shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: shed with wing, cold storage and dumpster enclosure

Major Alterations (with dates): Rear wing, prior to 1855; rear dining hall, recent decades.

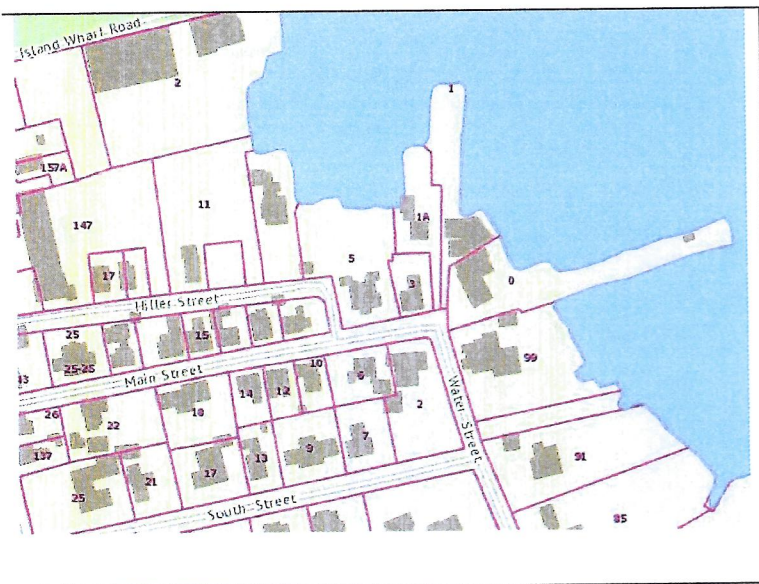
Condition: Excellent

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ Date:

Acreage: 0.82 acre

Setting: Densely settled residential mix of early 19th through 20th century arranged in a grid street pattern.

Locus Map



Recorded by: John D. Clemson

Organization: Sippican Historical Society

Date (month / year): June, 2019

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☒ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.*If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Sherman's Inn/ Luce-Sherman-Harwood House and Shipyard, was evidently constructed for members of the Luce family prior to 1784. Like many 18th century houses in the Wharf Village area it is a variation on a type and form known as the "cape," a broad three- or five-bay, two-pile-deep building of a single story enclosed under a side-gable roof. In this case, it is a three-bay example with a gambrel roof. The employment of a gambrel was fashionable in prosperous New England ports for both large-scale and more modest houses during the 18th century. This 34-foot-wide by 30-foot-deep example retains a large central chimney in its original location. Its center entry is currently obscured by an enclosed, hipped entry porch. The building has been expanded and elaborated numerous times during its history. A rear, gabled ell was added to the center of the rear elevation by 1855. A Single-story canted bay was added to the right (south-facing) elevation and a pair of symmetrically arranged broad dormers with two lights each added to the front slope of the roof, probably by subsequent owner Admiral Harwood (owner 1873-1884; such dormers are said to have been a common expansion to early capes throughout the Wharf Village during the town's development as a summer resort during the late-19th century). At the same time the cornice of the gambrel was likely extended and elaborated at the sides with molded freeze, rake boards and eave returns. More recently a side porch was added on the south side and since 1998 a large, 38-foot-square dining pavilion was added as well off the rear end of the building. The north side of the building is enlarged by a shed-roofed wing at the first level and what appears to be an enclosed stair and stair tower above, both recent additions of indeterminate date. A small, detached, gabled shed is visible to the left of the main building in the photograph of the left elevation, below. Despite these resort-era additions and elaborations, the house retains original, early or in-kind finishes, including wood shingle siding and roofing, plain corner boards and casings, and wood six-over-six and two-over-two sash.

The house is sited close to the frontage facing west toward Water Street on a deep lot that backs onto Sippican Harbor. An open grass-planted rear garden leads to a wood and metal pier, gangway and floats. A small dock of 18th – early 19th century vintage that may originally have been a launching way survives at the south end of the waterfront. The coastal zone has been improved with a straight, dry laid retaining wall of large glacial and coarsely split granite blocks. Immediately to the north of the north property line is an 18th-century earthen wharf lined by dry-laid granite blocks that extends into the harbor several hundred feet that may be historically associated with the property (labelled "Sherman's Wharf" in 1855).

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The history of this property has been traced with a reasonable degree of certainty to a deed dated 1784. The building's form and appearance suggests it could well date to the 18th century, however a detailed interior inspection would be required to assess physical evidence to verify such an attribution, an undertaking which may lay beyond the scope of this project. Deeds prior to 1784, in 1765 and 1777, link the owner at the time, Barnabas Luce, to earlier potential owners that included two generations of the Wing family, Samuel and his sons David and Samuel, but further research will be required to verify that these instruments refer to the subject property. The 1784 deed mentions buildings and documents the division of the house between two owners in common. This instrument noted that "Barnabas Luce, inholder (sic), and Stephen Cunningham, mariner, both of Rochester...do own and stand seized in fee in common and undivided..." the subject property; it goes on to include a detailed description of the division of the building between the two, assigning rights to various interior and exterior spaces, and the following details (spelling corrected):

...two certain tracts or parcels of land in said Rochester, together with a dwelling house on one of said tracts, and are situate on the westerly side of Sippican Harbor, one of which pieces adjoining said harbor and bounded southerly by lands belonging to the heirs of Levi Hiller, deceased, and northerly by George Blankinship's land, easterly by the harbor, and westerly by Rowland Luce's land; the other piece is bounded westerly by the highway, southerly by the land of the aforesaid Levi Hiller's heir's land, northerly by Seth Hiller's homestead lands and easterly by the lands of the aforesaid Rowland Luce.¹

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Luce's identification as "inholder" may suggest the property's historic use; it is also later identified as "Sherman's Inn" by Gordon, which is uncited but may be based upon local knowledge.² Barnabas Luce (1725-1808) was enumerated in the 1790 Federal Census of Rochester in a household consisting of three free white males over the age of 16. His immediate neighbors included Charles Blankinship, Stephen Cunningham, George Blankinship, Rowland Luce and Timothy Hiller. These surnames are consistent with abutters referenced in subsequent deeds and supports the supposition that the 1784 deed describes at least a portion of the subject property (later deeds convey a small portion of harbor-front from Rowland Luce to heirs of Barnabas Luce).³

A subsequent deed documents the acquisition of half the property by James C. Luce from Theophilus Pitcher, Jr. in 1829 (documentation of Pitcher's acquisition and identity could not be readily ascertained). Although this instrument lacks a physical description the reference to the earlier deed and subsequent conveyances suggest it amounted to a consolidation of the property under the control of Luce. Luce also purchased "...a small triangular piece of land terminating at the sea lying northerly of the eastern intersection of the said James' line with mine..." in 1831 from Rolland Luce, Jr.⁴ Although genealogical records are inconclusive, they suggest James C. Luce was a descendant of Barnabas Luce (James' father was Capt. Joseph Luce, ca. 1780-1831). Capt. James C. Luce (1806-1879), a Rochester native, was well-known for his role in a major shipwreck, the loss of the *Arctic*, a side-paddle steamer owned by the Collins Line, in 1854.⁵ It is not clear whether Luce resided in Rochester during his ownership of the property between prior to 1829 and 1834; toward the end of his life, he resided in New Rochelle, NY.

An 1834 deed from James C. Luce, mariner, to Edward Sherman of Rochester, shipwright, includes a description consistent with later deeds:

A lot or parcel of land situate in that part of the said Rochester called Sippican and bounded as follows, viz., beginning at a stake and stones in the southwesterly corner of said lot and thence N 82°E by the line of Roland Luce, Jr. to the sea. Thence commencing at the first bound, northerly by the road leading to Ebenezer Holmes 155 feet to the line of George Blankinships, thence N 84°E by said George Blankinships line to the sea, and this together with the dwelling house and out buildings now standing on the said lot or parcel of land.⁶

Edward Sherman (ca. 1791-1867) was consistently identified as a shipwright, ship carpenter, and carpenter in period records. According to Ryder, Edward Sherman built schooners "on the Admiral Harwood Lot," including *Ocean Queen*, *John Frazier*, and *Edward Franklin*. The 1850 Federal Census identifies him as a ship carpenter owning \$1,200 worth of real estate. His household included his wife, Celia (Sturtevant, born ca. 1793), four surviving children born between 1829 and 1831, including Lucy T., Edward F., Malora M., Celia A. Blankinship, and son-in-law Tobias Blankinship, sailor. His neighbors included Nathan Briggs, sailor; Nathan H. Briggs, sailor, Rowland Luce, sailor; Joseph Luce, shoemaker; James Luce, sailor; Russel Gray, sailor; Edwin Luce, ship carpenter; Stephen C. Luce, mercantile; and Frederick P. Handy, ship carpenter, providing a demographic snap shot of the neighborhood at the time as well as a number of names familiar from deeds associated with the property. Some of these surnames also appear on the 1855 Walling map. Until 1852, when it was incorporated as a separate town, Marion had been a section of the town of Rochester immediately to the north.⁷

1 PCRD 62:177 (1784). PCRD 50:52 (1765) and 59:90 (1777) record conveyances from Samuel Wing to David and Samuel Wing for consideration of "paternal affection" and from David Wing, yeoman, to Barnabas Luce, mariner, for consideration of £135, however the descriptions are not precise to the degree that could confirm their association with the subject property.

2 Edward W. Gordon, MRN.N, 1998.

3 Ancestry.com: 1790 Federal Census; Rochester Vital Records to 1849, deaths: Barnabas Luce, husband of Rebekah, husband of Abigail, d. Sep. 19, 1808 in 83d year.

4 PCRD 165:241 (1829); 173:53 (1831).

5 *New York Times*, Oct. 16, 1854, p. 1, "The Arctic. Rescue of Capt. Luce and Nine Others by the Bark Cambria. Thrilling Narrative of Capt. Luce, Interesting Statement of Mr. Gilbert. Statements of Messrs. Mitchell, Dupasseur and Degnon" and Jul. 11, 1879, p. 8, Obituary. The wreck occurred in the fog off Cape Race, Newfoundland, as a result of a collision in the fog, and 300 lives, including Luce's young son, were lost. Despite the disaster Luce's actions during the sinking were considered to have been heroic. After lifeboats were commandeered by a mutinous crew, Luce remained with the vessel and passengers and made utmost efforts to keep it afloat. He was rescued after clinging to flotsam.

6 PCRD 182:124 (1834).

7 Ancestry.com: 1850 Federal Census; 1855 Massachusetts State Census; deaths registered in the Town of Marion, 1867; Rochester Vital Records to 1849, marriages; Alice Austin Ryder, *Lands of Sippican on Buzzards Bay* (Sippican Historical Society, 1975) p. 93; Charles S.

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In 1868 son Edward Franklin Sherman (1821-1907), also a ship carpenter and carpenter, acquired shares of the property from siblings Paul W. Sherman of Brooklyn, NY, Lucy T. Bruce of Provincetown, and Celia A. Blankinship of Marion. Consideration was \$1,000 and the deed included the following language "...the same being the property of the estate of Edward Sherman who was the father of the above named parties..." Edward F. Sherman was married to Melora Monson (Blankinship, 1827-1902).

In 1873 Edward F. Sherman, at the time residing in Charlestown, sold the property to Andrew A. Harwood of Annapolis, MD, for consideration of \$1,200. Rear Admiral Andrew Allan Harwood (1802-1884) was an accomplished naval officer. A native of Pennsylvania, he began his career with the Navy in 1818. A full account of his accomplishments in the Navy records his commissions on various ships, including the frigate *Constitution* (1824-1827), his administration of the Bureau of Ordnance and Hydrography (1861), Commodore of the Washington Navy Yard (1862), and Secretary of the Lighthouse Board (1864-1869), among other positions, related in his *New York Times* obituary. He was, through his mother, Elizabeth Franklin Bache, a great-grandson of Benjamin Franklin. According to both Rosbe and Gordon, Harwood and later his daughter, "Bessie," played key roles in the seasonal social milieu during the apex of Marion's resort era. An active lay reader, Harwood was largely responsible for the establishment of St. Gabriel's Episcopal Church. Elizabeth Franklin Harwood (1831-1892), who never married, was a close friend of *The Century Magazine* publisher Richard Watson Gilder, another prominent cottager of the period, and his family, and participated in local theatricals for many years. The cottage remained in the ownership of Harwood's descendants until 1955.8

In 1955 Barbara R. Tailer, executor under the will of Alice S. Register, a Harwood descendant, sold the property to the Beverly Yacht Club, identified as the Trustees of the Beverly Land Trust, Parker Converse, W. Davis Taylor, and F. Stanton Deland, Jr. The Beverly Yacht Club's history is recounted in detail by Rosbe. The club was founded on the north shore of Boston in 1872 by a group of small-boat yachtsmen who broke from the Eastern Yacht Club of Marblehead due to the latter's rule restricting boats to over 30 feet. The club is named for the eponymous north shore town. The founding members included brothers Walter and Edward B. Burgess, and Walter served as the first commodore, followed by his brother. Edward Burgess went on to become an important naval architect, designing several America's Cup defenders, including *Puritan* (1885), *Mayflower* (1886) and *Volunteer* (1887), and was the father of naval and pioneering aeronautical architect W. Starling Burgess (1879-1947, see MAR.937, 938 and 1677). Later the club engaged the foremost yacht designer of the late-19th and early 20th century, Bristol, RI builder Nathaniel Herreshoff (1848-1938), to produce one-designs exclusively for use by the club. "For the first 23 years, the club had no fixed location. It held regattas around the north shore in Beverly, Swampscott, Nahant and Marblehead. It also ran races in South Boston and Cohasset and in various Buzzards Bay locations off Monument Beach, West Falmouth, Quissett, and Marion." In 1895 the club acquired its initial permanent home at Wing's Neck, Bourne. In 1913 a new clubhouse was erected on land purchased by the club at Butler's Point (also known as Ruggle's Point, see Kittansett Area MRN.X) in Marion, and the club shortly afterward merged with the Sippican Yacht Club. This facility was destroyed in the 1938 hurricane. During the 1940s the club rented facilities at the Kittansett Club winter house. During the early 1950s the club rented part of Barden's Boat Yard. When the Barden's yard facilities were destroyed in another hurricane in 1954, the club found a new home at the subject building, which they leased from the Beverly Land Trust. According to yachting correspondent Leonard M. Fowle:

To borrow a phrase from a college coach of this observer's acquaintance, the Beverly Yacht Club of Marion seems 'to thrive on adversity.' In a history extending over 83 years, the club has survived a mass exodus of its membership from the North Shore to Buzzards Bay, five changes in the location of its clubhouse, and three hurricanes to bounce up stronger than ever after each upheaval. After 1938, when the Butler's Point clubhouse submarined into Buzzards Bay, Beverly came up with new quarters and gave birth to the Yankee One-Designs; so, following the ravages of Carol and Edna last September, Beverly will have a new class plus a new clubhouse on a new location in 1955.9

Hamlin et al, *Mattapoisett and Old Rochester, Massachusetts, Being a History of These Towns and Also in Part of Marion and a Portion of Wareham* (The Grafton Press, 1907) p. 182.

8 PCRD 401:17 (1873); *New York Times*, Aug. 19, 1884, p. 2, Obituary; Edward W. Gordon (MRN.N, Wharf Village; MRN.303, Sherman's Inn); Judith Westlund Rosbe, *Marion in the Golden Age* (History Press, 2009) pp. 13-19.

9 Judith Westlund Rosbe, *Maritime Marion, Massachusetts* (Arcadia Publishing, 2002) pp. 98-106; _____, *The Beverly Yacht Club* (Arcadia Publishing, 2006) passim; Boston *Daily Globe*, Jan. 30, 1955, p. 63, Leonard M. Fowle, "Yachts and Yachtsmen, Beverly Y.C. Rebuilding Fleet, Clubhouse After Hurricane"

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More recently the club has added and improved the clubhouse, adding a large partially enclosed pavilion for dining and functions to the rear since 1998, and continues to be an active and well-supported social organization.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Maps and atlases:

- 1855 H.F. Walling, *Map of the Town of Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts*
 1879 Geo H Walker & Co, *Atlas of Plymouth County Massachusetts*.
 1903 L. J. Richards & Co, *New Topographic Atlas of Surveys of Plymouth County ... Massachusetts*
 1908, 1921, 1933 Sanborn Insurance Atlases

Ancestry.com: see footnotes.

Edward W. Gordon, MRN.N, 1998.

Judith Westlund Rosbe, *Maritime Marion, Massachusetts* (Arcadia Publishing, 2002).

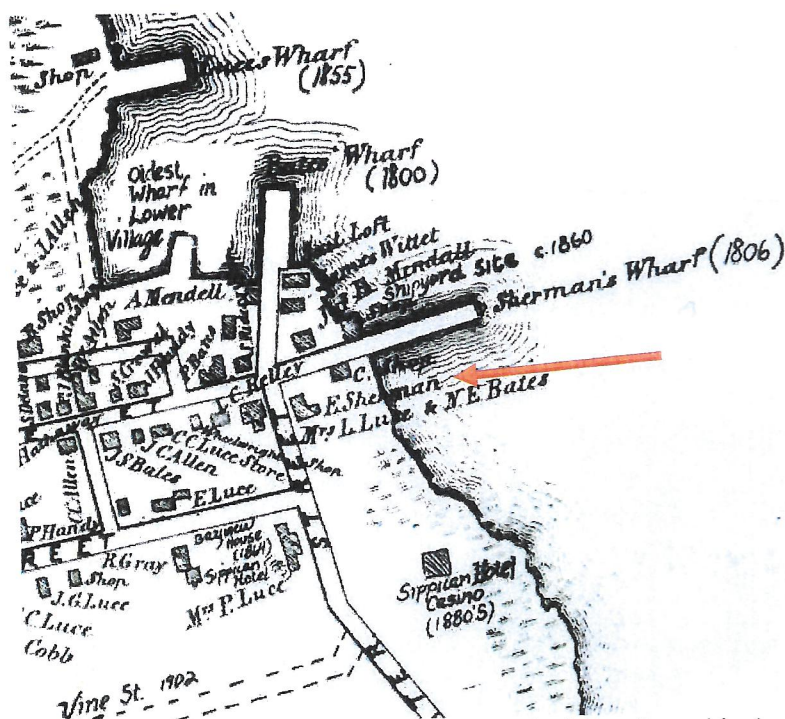
_____, *The Beverly Yacht Club* (Arcadia Publishing, 2006).

_____, *Marion in the Golden Age* (History Press, 2009).

Alice Austin Ryder, *Lands of Sippican on Buzzards Bay* (Sippican Historical Society, 1975).

Charles S. Hamlin et al, *Mattapoissett and Old Rochester, Massachusetts, Being a History of These Towns and Also in Part of Marion and a Portion of Wareham* (The Grafton Press, 1907).

Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, in notes as PCRD book:page.



1855 Walling map (with later annotations) depicting the subject property labelled "E Sherman" and abutting "Sherman's Wharf." Note that the footprint appears to include a rear ell. North is up.

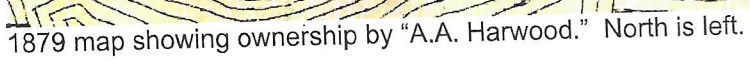
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Left (north) elevation.

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Rear ell and dining pavilion.



Grounds and pier.

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[If appropriate, cut and paste the text below into an inventory form's last continuation sheet.]

National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- ☒ Individually eligible ☐ Eligible **only** in a historic district
☒ Contributing to a potential historic district ☐ Potential historic district

Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ DCriteria Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ GStatement of Significance by John D. Clemson*The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.*

The Sherman's Inn/ Luce-Sherman-Harwood House and Shipyard at 99 Water Street, built prior to 1784 and currently the home of the Beverly Yacht Club, would be eligible for National Register criterion A for its association with several layers of ownership, including inn-holder Barnabas Luce, Capt. James C. Luce, shipwright Edward Sherman, U.S. Navy Rear Admiral Andrew A. Harwood, and the Beverly Yacht Club. Both Harwood and his daughter, Bessie, also played important roles in the development of Marion as a popular summer resort during the fourth quarter of the 19th century. The Beverly Yacht Club, occupant of the building since 1955 but established in 1872, played an important role in the history of yachting through its association with important designers including Edward Burgess and Nathaniel Herreshoff. The property also retains a well-preserved, likely late-18th century building, whose architecture serves as an important physical document both of Marion's 18th-century maritime and late-19th resort history, suggesting that it would also be eligible under criterion C. The property's areas of significance include architecture, commerce, industry, maritime history, social history and transportation. The building and site retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.